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President's Notes: Firing Line

Julien J. LeBourgeois
U.S. Navy

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PRESIDENT'S NOTES

By the time you read this 1977 Spring issue of the *Naval War College Review*, I will have taken leave of the College after having served as its President for nearly three years. My successor, Rear Admiral Huntington Hardisty, is a much decorated combat commander who has had high-level staff assignments in the Fleet and in Washington. Having previously served at the College as Dean of Academics, he understands the institution, the policies in force and the initiatives now underway. I am proud to turn over my responsibilities to him, knowing that the College and, most importantly, the students will be well served by this appointment.

When one reflects on the wonderful associations and rich experiences of a tour as President of the College, thoughts turn to the heritage left to us all by such greats as Luce, Mahan, Sims and Spruance—officers who had pivotal influences on the College from its inception, through the formative years and following the largest and most devastating war in which our nation has been involved. One thinks of the splendid officers, academicians, and civilian employees who breathe life and spirit into the day-to-day activities of the College. But, most of all, it is the students who are in one's thoughts—those superb officers representing all

our Services and many international navies. Those who have gone before can note with satisfaction the quality, the high intelligence, the sense of service and the energy of our future maritime leaders. They are a source of inspiration to all who are assigned to the College.

As the helm is turned over, I believe the faculty can take great satisfaction in having produced challenging and dynamic curricula for the several courses offered. Especially significant is the concentration on concepts and principles useful for the remainder of an officer's service. The practical case studies by which these concepts and principles are illustrated lend a high degree of pertinence and currency to the curricula, thus reinforcing the student's grasp of the timeless guideposts to future action. I am confident that the College is on the right course insofar as the resident courses are concerned. There are, however, three other issues which will influence the future of the College and its role in the professional military education of the officer corps: Continuing Education, War Gaming and Advanced Research.

Only a small percentage of the Navy's officers are able to attend the College—at the same time, what the College has to offer would improve the professionalism of those unable to

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attend and improve the quality of their service to the Nation. Under the leadership of Professor Thomas Weschler, our program for Continuing Education has been revitalized in the aftermath of the Vietnam War to make available to the officer corps at large much of what is contained in the resident curricula. Seminar programs in Washington paralleling the resident courses have proven to be exceptionally well received. A new extension program of Professional Military Education is now in the pilot stage. We have also taken the Naval Operations course on a test basis to the nuclear submariners in New London since they cannot yet be spared from sea duty to attend the College. Through Continuing Education, we are on the verge of a major contribution to the competence of our officers.

The importance of War Gaming to our officers' professional development, to their decisionmaking ability and to their sense of strategic and tactical awareness is well known. Historically, the College has led the way in the development and use of gaming techniques. With the new and substantially improved Naval War Gaming facility scheduled, under the direction of Captain Herbert Cherrier, to come on line in 1980, a wide range of new and important capabilities suggests a renewed emphasis on war gaming at the College and throughout the Navy as an aid to professional development. The opportunity for 20 students to be exercised simultaneously as Fleet Commanders will exist. Ultimately, we envisage remote terminals in Norfolk, San Diego and Pearl Harbor so that Fleet Commanders may test operation plans and develop their subordinates' tactical proficiency without the necessity to leave their headquarters. Terminals aboard ships are also being considered. The future of war gaming at the College will be limited mainly by our ability to use

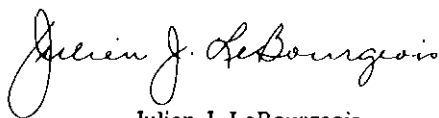
imaginatively the capabilities which will soon exist.

But, most of all, I am encouraged by the prospect of a major contribution by the College to the readiness of our maritime forces to meet the demands of the future as the result of a burgeoning program of Advanced Research now underway at the College under the leadership of Professor Hugh Nott. Several of the most recent and forward-looking tactical research products have been issued Navy-wide as CNO Tactical Notes, and other current projects are exploring the nature of future Navy missions and force employment concepts.

These promising initiatives in Continuing Education, War Gaming, and Advanced Research have been undertaken by the College in support of its expanding role in the creative development of the Navy's strategic and tactical thought. Success thus far is encouraging but, like all initiatives, these ventures must be supported and nourished.

I could not have asked for wiser or more enthusiastic support than I have received from Navy leaders and friends, and I am particularly grateful to the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, my associates here at the College, and the Naval War College Foundation for their understanding and commitment to our professional military education goals.

To all of those who now inherit both the past and the future of the Naval War College, I extend my deepest thanks, best wishes, and warmest confidence.



Julien J. LeBourgeois
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy
President, Naval War College